



CRPM CPMR

CONFÉRENCE DES RÉGIONS PÉRIPHÉRIQUES MARITIMES D'EUROPE
CONFERENCE OF PERIPHERAL MARITIME REGIONS OF EUROPE

6, rue Saint-Martin 35700 RENNES - F
Tel. : + 33 (0)2 99 35 40 50 - Fax : + 33 (0)2 99 35 09 19
e.mail : secretariat@crpm.org - web : www.crpm.org

34th CPMR GENERAL ASSEMBLY 25/27 October 2006 - Murcia (Spain)

The Peripheral Maritime Regions listed below met in Murcia (Spain) on 25-27 October 2006 for the 34th CPMR General Assembly

ABERDEENSHIRE (UK), ABRUZZO (IT), AÇORES (PT), ALENTEJO (PT), ALGARVE (PT), ANATOLIKI MAKEDONIA THRAKI (GR), ANDALUCIA (ES), AQUITAINE (FR), ARAGÓN (ES), ARGYLL & BUTE (UK), ÅRHUS (DK), ASTURIAS (ES), BALEARES (ES), BASSE-NORMANDIE (FR), BORDER (DONEGAL, IE), BORNHOLM (DK), BRETAGNE (FR), BUSKERUD (NO), CALARASI (RO), CAMPANIA (IT), CANAKKALE (TR), CANARIAS (ES), CANTABRIA (ES), CASTILLA Y LEÓN (ES), CENTRE (FR), CENTRO (PT), COMUNITAT VALENCIANA (ES), CORNWALL (UK), CORSE (FR), DEVON (UK), DYTIKI ELLADA (GR), EAST MIDLANDS REGIONAL ASSEMBLY (UK), EAST OF ENGLAND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY (UK), EAST OF SCOTLAND EUROPEAN CONSORTIUM (UK), EDIRNE (TR), FAMAGUSTA (CY), FIFE (UK), FRIULI VENEZIA-GIULIA (IT), GALATI (RO), GALICIA (ES), GÄVLEBORG (SE), GLOUCESTERSHIRE* (UK), GOTLAND (SE), HALLAND (SE), HAMPSHIRE (UK), HAUTE-NORMANDIE (FR), HIGHLAND (UK), HORDALAND (NO), IONIA NISIA (GR), ISLE OF MAN (UK), ITÄ-UUSIMAA (FI), KLAIPEDA (LT), KRITI (GR), KYMENLAAKSO (FI), LA REUNION (FR), LANGUEDOC-ROUSSILLON (FR), LAZIO (IT), LISBOA E VALE DO TEJO (PT), MADEIRA (PT), MARTINIQUE (FR), MECKLENBURG-VORPOMMERN (DE), MØRE OG ROMSDAL (NO), MURCIA (ES), NAVARRA (ES), NOORD NEDERLAND (NL), NORDJYLLAND (DK), NORDLAND (NO), NORD-PAS-DE-CALAIS (FR), NORRBOTTEN (SE), NORTE (PT), NOTIO AIGAIO (GR), ORKNEY (UK), ØSTFOLD (NO), OSTROBOTHNIA (FI), OULU REGION (FI), PÄIJÄT-HÄME (FI), PAÍS VASCO (ES), PÄRNUMAA (EE), PAYS DE LA LOIRE (FR), PODLASKIE (PL), POITOU-CHARENTES (FR), PROVENCE-ALPES CÔTE D'AZUR (FR), RIGA (LV), RINGKØBING (DK), ROGALAND (NO), SAAREMAA (EE), SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN* (DE), SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE (UK), SHETLAND (UK), SICILIA (IT), SINOP (TR), SKÅNE (SE), SOGN OG FJORDANE (NO), SØR-TRØNDELAG (NO), SOUTH OF SCOTLAND ALLIANCE (UK), SOUTH-WEST FINLAND (FI), STOCKHOLM (SE), TEKIRDAG (TR), TELEMAR (NO), THESSALIA (GR), TOSCANA (IT), TROMS (NO), TUKUMS (LV), TULCEA (RO), UUSIMAA (FI), VÄSTERBOTTEN (SE), VÄSTRA-GÖTALAND (SE), VESTFOLD (NO), VIBORG (DK), VOREIO AIGAIO (GR), WESTERN ISLES (UK).

(*) *Observer*

On behalf of the Regions present, the President of the CPMR, Mr Claudio Martini, should like to extend his most sincere thanks to the Region of Murcia and its President, Mr Luis Ramón Valcarcel Siso, for their hospitality and welcome.

His thanks also go to all the attending participants representing National Governments, Regional Authorities and European institutions who took part in the work of the Conference. He especially wishes to thank Mrs Danuta Hübner, European Commissioner for Regional Policy, Mr Michel Delebarre, President of the Committee of the Regions, Mr Alberto Navarro, Spanish State Secretary for European Affairs and Mr Antti Mykkänen, State Secretary, representing the six month Finnish Presidency of the EU.

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Final Declaration and resolutions



In the name of its 155 members, the Conference of the Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe meeting for its 34th Annual General Assembly in Murcia, adopted the following Final Declaration and Resolutions:

FINAL DECLARATION

1. For the Peripheral and Maritime Regions, 2006 was a nodal year:
 - it saw the end of a set of negotiations on European Union policies and laid down a basis until 2013;
 - it opened a new period of preparation for a more distant and, for the moment, more uncertain future.

DISAPPOINTING FINANCIAL PROSPECTS FOR 2007-2013
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2. In January 2000, the Conference turned its full attention to its contribution to the reformulation of an ambitious regional strategy to ensure the active involvement of its member Regions in the EU's objectives as translated in the strategies laid down in Lisbon and Gothenburg. The Conference provided constant support for the drafting process being led by the European Commissions and Messrs. Prodi and Durao Barroso, in close cooperation with Commissioners Barnier and Hübner. Indeed it would like, at this juncture, to express its most grateful and sincere thanks for their willingness to make themselves available, listen to others' points of view and discuss issues with them. Our thanks also go to the European Parliament and the Member States whose convictions resulted, in the final analysis, in preserving an essential place for regional policy in the financial perspectives adopted for the 2007-2013 period.

3. In the end, the risk of total renationalisation of the demand for territorial cohesion has been averted:
 - The essential solidarity with Regions that are lagging behind in development terms (Objective 1) has been provided for, especially with Regions in new Member States. However, the level of solidarity has decreased compared to previous periods;
 - Likewise, there is an ongoing policy with all the other Regions, to support their involvement in the competitiveness and employment objectives (Objective 2), despite the fact that the budget set aside for this is significantly lower than the initial proposals from the Commission and the CPMR;
 - The cooperation established through INTERREG during previous programming periods in the form of an EU initiative, has become the 3rd regional policy objective, taking it into the mainstream. The section most specifically devoted to transnational areas is the one which, unfortunately, has suffered most at the hands of Member States.

4. In the end, section 1b was the one subjected to the fewest restrictions as a result of the December 2005 compromise if we compare the final outcome with the result for the section dealing with research and transeuropean networks. The CPMR deeply regrets the major cuts that have affected these two key aspects of EU competitiveness and the low level of funding allocated to rural development. However, it is delighted to note the extent to which its Member Regions are willing to mobilise to inform their national governments of their desire for a continuation of the EU's solidarity and territorial development policy, based on successive opinions and addresses issued by their Political Bureau and General Secretariat throughout the year. Without this mobilisation, the end result would not have been achieved. This lesson should be remembered in the run-up to the next stage of negotiations for an EU territorial policy for the 2014-2020 period.

5. Quite apart from negotiations on budgets, the CPMR has noted the lack of ambition in the Community Strategic Guidelines (CSG) and the Regulations passed on the following issues:
 - the demand for territorial cohesion;

- the involvement of Regions in the preparation and introduction of new programmes.

In these two areas, it notes a backward step as regards the European Commission's ability to take control and observes a reappropriation of the available resources by the administrative authorities in Member States, going against the need for greater integration of territorial strategies in the European project.

A LACK-LUSTRE EUROPEAN UNION

6. The financial perspectives retained for the 2007-2013 period are only one of the signs of stagnating European ambition. They are combined with the "need to stop and think" about the institutional framework. On a deeper level, they reflect the doubts that are being expressed Europe-wide on the continent's ability to be an active, innovative partner in the current climate of globalisation. They also question the usefulness of its Member States joining forces to achieve such a stage. Europe is suffering from a duality of forces, some already fully determined to become part of the global scene in the making and others seeing themselves as victims of the new global relationships that are upsetting the "European model" built up over many long decades.

7. To overcome euroscepticism, Heads of State and Government must propose a current and future vision of Europe for their citizens, set against the background of the profoundly different world of the 21st century. Only such a strategic proposal can provide the basis for positive mobilisation on the part of those who are currently available and have the necessary energy, without inappropriate defensive stances being taken. The European Commission led by its President has a role to play here – but the signatories of the Treaties must also make it an essential issue in which their citizens play a part. This is not the case. Just like the era of the first oil crises (in 1973 and 1978) – and perhaps to an even greater extent - they have a tendency to hold back and look for national solutions without producing joint leadership or European mechanisms that could create more credible, stronger responses on an EU level. If our citizens doubt the usefulness of a deeper European structure, it is because this doubt results first and foremost from the attitude of most of those in authority. The result is a feeling of inability on the part of the EU to withstand the sheer scale of the challenges facing us.

A WORLD MAP UNDERGOING CONSTANT CHANGE

8. Only a careful analysis of the world will produce a diagnosis of the strengths and weaknesses of Europe in a new world in which:

- it will be possible to formulate a vision of the future for our citizens;
- there will be a list of objectives to be met by the Union as a whole through its Member States and regional and local authorities.

There are countless studies by experts. It is up to the European Commission, Parliament and Council to go beyond a partial translation of these studies, as expressed in the Lisbon and Gothenburg strategies, to offer our citizens a stimulating European ambition and draw the consequences in terms of direction, changes to institutions, and financial resources. At this price, the Union will regain its credibility on the inside and win credibility on the outside. Having been the main player in globalisation for five hundred years, Europe must succeed in becoming one of the partners today.

9. Those in charge of the Peripheral and Maritime Regions are experiencing the new situation on a daily basis, whether through climate change, natural resources, distribution of population (particularly as a result of migration) or changes in economic activities. They are seeking to provide support for these changes so that, between territories on all five continents, globalisation produces "win-win" situations for the population. This being so, just as thirty years ago they did not ignore the emergence of an extra-national European scene which their territory joined by becoming a full-scale player, so they cannot, today, fail to understand the global scene in which radical change has a determining effect on the viability of their businesses and the future of their children. In fact, they support this. European growth over the past few years has already been based as much on trade with the rest of the world as on the continuation of intra-Community trade. And the OECD has emphasised that the reservoirs of growth for its Member States are based first and foremost on the vitality of their regional economies.

10. This is why our Member Regions:

- Play a role in sustainable development policies, both in Europe and through the Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development (NRG4SD) set up at the Johannesburg Summit, for which the CPMR provides the management skills;
- Likewise, the Conference represents the Regions within FIPOL, expressing the concerns of proximity players;
- It is for the same reason that they considered the role of Regions in the European Union's energy policy and that they are continuing their work on maritime safety and security, integrated coastal zone management and adaptation to climate change;
- Many Member Regions have also created and increased the number of cooperative projects with other continents, either in the form of public policies or to support the integration and adaptation of their companies in the world market;
- In support of this effort, the CPMR signed a framework cooperation agreement with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

11. Basically, the Regions are waiting for their States and the European Union to lay down the institutional, legislative and financial conditions that will enable their territories to be fully and positively involved in the construction and governance of the world. This should be the result of the clause relating to the agreement by Heads of State and Government to meet again in 2008-2009, with all that this entails for the institutional framework and budgetary prospects for 2014-2020. Once they have received responses to this, they will be able to emphasise to their people the central role of the European Union in the light of the challenges of the 21st century. The results of this meeting will weigh very heavily on participation in European Parliament elections in June 2009.

REGIONAL ADVANTAGES TO CREATE A STRONG EUROPEAN UNION

12. The Regions intend to contribute as actively as possible to the preparation of this meeting. It is central to the CPMR's 5 guidelines for the forthcoming year.

Create a new basis for the territories' contribution to the prosperity of the EU

13. The political, legal and financial framework on which the European Regional Policy was negotiated for the 2007-2013 period, although it reveals a major change compared to previous programming periods, is the last surviving relative of the generations of programmes launched in 1988 as part of the "Delors 1" package. It is implausible to suggest that it might still be used as the basis for the creation of a territorial dimension for European Union Policy in the 2014-2020 period. New approaches must be proposed from the outset, at the discussion phase involving Heads of State and Government in 2008-2009. **The regional and territorial advantage** must be a factor as important as certain macro-economic variables in Europe's strategy of adaptation. The Kok Report underlined the limits of a system of control that was inadequately distributed and inadequately taken on board by all levels of governance.

14. To achieve this aim:

- Major work must be undertaken to capitalise on the interactions between globalisation and the regional territories for which our Member Regions are responsible;
- In the same way, our Regions must have real involvement in the governance of European policies, from the preparation stage to the implementation phase;
- Participation in cooperation programmes within the framework of Objective 3 will also continue;
- The CPMR wishes to be closely involved in consideration of the "territorial agenda" being undertaken by Member States. In this respect, it expresses its gratitude to the Dutch government and informs the next semestrial German Presidency that it is available and willing to establish contacts.

These preparatory elements will make a contribution to a meeting of European players from national, regional and local levels who will propose to the Council the new bases for the Union's regional and territorial dimension at the meeting of 2008-2009.

15. With the same concerns in mind, the CPMR will maintain its involvement in a few **key-sector issues** that affect the vitality of its Member Regions and their contribution to the achievement of EU objectives.

16. The General Assembly can only regret the low level of progress made in the promotion of maritime **transport** and its interconnection with other forms of transport. It also underlines the inadequate attention paid to accessibility in the TEN-T objectives. Furthermore, air services are at risk, an issue which a working group drawn from CPMR Member Regions intends to study in greater depth over the next few months.

The Conference will pay particular attention to the following:

- adoption of the TEN-T financial regulations and the Pluri-Annual Indicative Programme for 2007-2013;
- general proposal for infrastructure costing which the European Commission has announced for 2008.

17. Member Regions congratulate the Stockholm and Asturias Regions for the quality of the work that they have chaired with the Regions in the working group with a view to greater CPMR involvement in **employment and training policies**. The Regions share the conclusions drawn from this approach. The material collated could constitute a basis for new dialogue and partnership with the European Commission in this area. The Regions would like initial contacts with the Commissioner and his departments to allow for a stronger contribution from the regional authorities to the enhancement of their human resources.

18. In accordance with the guidelines, the CPMR has also begun considering the contribution made by its Member Regions to the European **energy** policy. The General Assembly expresses its gratitude to Navarre and the various Regions in the Energy working group for all their work. It has formed the basis of new dialogue with Commissioner Piebalgs and the relevant departments in the European Commission, as well as with the European Parliament. Efforts should continue and should focus on the following:

- adequate development of TEN-Energy in peripheral maritime areas;
- compatibility of environmental legislation with the development of renewable energy sources;
- developments in State environmental aids.

19. The Conference intends to continue its examination of the future of **European agriculture, developments in supportive public policies, and the impact of these changes on the development of rural areas**. It will embark on a process of information gathering for debate at the next General Assembly.

20. As far as the legislative and regulatory framework for **competition** is concerned, the CPMR would like to thank Commissioner Nelly Kroes and her departments for continuing the dialogue that began in 2005. The Conference is particularly satisfied with:

- the upholding of 87.3.c zoning;
- the raising of the minimum ceiling;
- awareness of a territorial dimension in the new measures introduced to encourage venture capital;
- clarification of the framework on grants for innovation and grants for R&D linked to the priorities of regional policy for 2007-2013.

The Conference will closely monitor the following:

- Proposals by the Commission to simplify the delivery mechanisms for regional aids;
- the implementation, on a State by State basis, of the new map of State regional aids in the light of the territorial cohesion principle;
- the publication of frameworks for State aids in the environment sector.

21. The work, which is internal to the European Union, will be rounded off by an analysis and discussion with Regions on other continents on the difficulties and successes of territorial development in the light of globalisation. At the invitation of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region, the CPMR will be organising the first Global Seminar on Territorial Development on 5th, 6th and 7th March 2007 with the United Nations Development Programme. The aim of the seminar will be to clarify the conditions for fair territorial development; the aim will not be to exacerbate competition.

22. At its next General Assembly in Rome, with the 2008-2009 meeting on the horizon, the CPMR will summarise all these approaches with a view to using its proposals for greater involvement on the part of its Member Regions to contribute to the future success of the European Union's policies.

The sea at the heart of the European continental project

23. The General Assembly would like to express its congratulations and deepest thanks to the President of the European Commission, Mr. José Manuel Durao Barroso; to the Commissioner for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, Mr. Joe Borg; to the Director of the "Maritime Affairs" Task Force, Mr. John Richardson; and to their departments for the quality of the work undertaken during the preparation of the Green Paper on Europe's maritime dimension. It would also like express its gratitude to its 50 Member Regions and the cities that have joined it in the "Europe of the Sea" project, and to its Scientific Council, bearing in mind its wish to expand upon the Green Paper by including CPMR proposals. It includes in these thanks the Minister of European Affairs for Schleswig-Hölstein, Mr. Döring, for his work as *Rapporteur* for the Committee of the Regions on this issue. The involvement of so many has enabled us to complete a first stage in the consideration of a very old concern of the Conférence.

24. Beyond the consultation phase in which the CPMR will play a proactive part, the Member Regions have underlined their desire for the ambition suggested as one of the main areas of the EU's future strategic guidelines to be effectively translated into law. However, they question the depth of the commitment expressed by the European Parliament and Council. Only real awareness of the advantages and power of the Sea as a means to the internal development of the European Union and its presence in the world of the 21st century will ensure that the approach launched through the Green Paper does not end with a short-lived and discouraging illusion. This subject should be the driving force for renewed ambition on the part of the European Union in the same way that the space policies were in the past.

25. The General Assembly ardently wishes to see the following:

- the semestrial presidencies of Finland in 2006, and Germany and Portugal in 2007 should turn the maritime dimension of the European Union into a central, major topic, to reflect Europe's real place in the world;
- the European Parliament should introduce an appropriate procedure for the reading of the Green Paper and all sequels thereto through a special ad hoc Commission capable of looking at all the aspects of such a transversal issue compared to the competences of its Commissions;
- both these approaches should, by the end of 2007, help to promote the adoption of an ambitious European strategy that might constitute one of the key elements to be taken into consideration at the 2008-2009 meeting.

26. As a corollary to this, under the aegis of the Shetland Islands which the CPMR would like to thank for their commitment, Member Regions will continue to monitor the implementation of the European **Fisheries Fund**, in particular Axis 4 covering the sustainable development of coastal fishing grounds, and Regional Consultative Committees. The CPMR will continue in 2007 to organise interregional meetings on fisheries with DG Fisheries and Maritime Affairs. These meetings will provide an opportunity for direct dialogue between the representatives of maritime regions, EU Member States and the Commission.

27. The implementation of Erika packets 1, 2 and 3 should, as agreed with the Regions of Pays de la Loire and Cantabria, be the subject of a seminar to evaluate and monitor the regulations on **maritime safety and security** at the invitation of the Region of Cantabria. In particular, a position will be considered in 2007 on the regulations applicable to container ships and ship breakers' yards.

The conditions for sustainable development

28. Member Regions are particularly sensitive to the expected impact of **climate change**. Because of this, they have joined in the work to prepare a Green Paper on adaptation to climate change launched by the European Commission, based on responses to a questionnaire circulated by the CPMR.

They are also awaiting proposals from the Commission on the conditions under which **integrated coastal zone management** can continue. They are again making themselves available to play an active role in both these areas. In particular, they will contribute to the "Mediterranean 2020" pollution control initiative. In all these sectors, the CPMR will identify cooperation projects to be undertaken during the next programming period.

29. On all these issues, the Regions will encourage their global network, NRG4SD, to continue its work on climate change and to forge its own view of a global maritime policy. It can then table its proposals with the

International Maritime Organisation. The Region of Brittany has launched an invitation for the next NRG4SD summit meeting, in September 2008.

Promoting the place of Regions at different levels of governance

30. The information collected on the conditions under which Regions could be involved in the implementation of new generations of European policies for the 2007-2013 period reveal very strong contrasts from one Member State to another and from one policy to another. It is obvious that the administrative authorities of the 25 Member States which signed the draft Treaty created as a result of the work of the Convention for the Future of Europe did not align their documents on the political choices expressed by their Heads of State and Government:

- involvement of regional and local levels in European Union policies in their areas of competence;
- adoption of the principle of territorial cohesion.

31. The CPMR regrets this very much. This issue will be central to the 2008-2009 discussions. Its Member Regions intend to participate in these discussions using three different approaches:

- they will continue to observe and capitalise on best practices for the governance of territorial development and the involvement of the Regions in EU policies. This work will be undertaken as part of the Governance Observatory project that the Committee of the Regions intends to set up with the CPMR. The relevant idea of Tripartite Contracts must continue to be promoted, tested and implemented within this context, as one possible form of EU/States/Regions partnership.
- through the Committee of the Regions and any other regional and local authority organisations that wish to do so, they will be very careful to increase awareness of the regional dimension and the principle of territorial cohesion when negotiations on changes to the Treaty begin again.
- they will call upon the German Presidency to enhance the democratic life of the Union by including in any political declaration marking the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome, specific reference to the role of Europe's Regions and Local Authorities. This will put the regions in a better position to support Member States, the European Commission and European Parliament in formulating and implementing EU policy.

32. The emergence of decision-making centres outside the EU is weighing more and more heavily on the measure of independence left to Member Regions. To meet this challenge, the CPMR will continue its reflection based on the conclusions drawn from the Azores Seminar, with the other global and continental networks of regional authorities. It will also continue its consideration of global institutions as regards the setting up of ability, on the part of the Regions, to take part in the agencies that have the greatest significance for regional policies.

33. In the same way, Member Regions of the CPMR especially within their Geographical Commissions, but also through other transregional maritime networks such as Arc Manche, intend to play an active part in the inclusion of their territories at the various geographical levels on which their exchanges and chances of development are played out. In addition to cooperation within the EU (cross-border, transnational and interregional), the Regions express the need to be present in the decentralised section:

- of neighbourhood policies in the Mediterranean area, in the Balkans, in the Black Sea, the North Sea, the Baltic Sea and within the framework of the Northern Dimension of the European Union.
- of EU policies with other continents, especially Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa and the Indian Ocean.

34. Dialogue has begun on this issue with the relevant departments of the European Commission and certain Member States. It is also part of the general agreement concluded with the United Nations Development Programme with a view to increasing, at their request, the effectiveness of countless bilateral cooperation agreements led by Member Regions. In 2007-2008, a total of 5 or 6 real projects should make it possible to develop efficient working methods.

EFFECTIVELY UNITING THE STRENGTHS OF OUR REGIONS

35. The new battles on the horizon for our organisation are very real challenges. None of the hopes and expectations of our Member Regions and their populations should be seen as won in advance.

In addition to the General Secretariat's adaptation to changes in priorities, the Conference must continue to question its ability to bring together all those Regions which support:

- a more polycentric development of the continent;
- a vigorous maritime development.

36. The CPMR should, in particular, be able to supply a stronger answer, at the risk of separate paths being followed by the Regions in the Europe of 15 Member States, Europe of 25 and, soon, Europe with 27 members. The opinions of the peripheral Regions would be strengthened in dialogue and negotiations with the Commission and the Council. The years 2007 and 2008 should be turned to advantage to undertake internal consideration of a topic that is decisive for the future. As in 2003, an in-depth questionnaire will be sent out by the Political Bureau to all Member Regions and other Regions in spring 2007 asking them about their expectations in the face of an interregional organisation that supported a polycentric development for Europe. The 2007 General Assembly, at the invitation of the Lazio Region, will be required to take on board the responses that it has received.

The General Assembly invites the Political Bureau and the General Secretary to implement the guidelines outlined above.

Adopted unanimously

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RESOLUTIONS

II.1 - Resolution on fisheries (closed or protected areas)

(Presented by the North Sea Commission)

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### **II.2 - Resolution on the Maritime Policy challenges in the Baltic and the North Sea Regions**

(Presented by the North Sea Commission and the Baltic Sea Commission)

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II.3 - Resolution: the Northern Dimension Policy for 2007 and onwards

(Presented by the North Sea Commission and the Baltic Sea Commission)

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# RESOLUTIONS PRESENTED BY THE GEOGRAPHICAL COMMISSIONS

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- II.1 -

## FISHERIES REGARDING "CLOSED OR PROTECTED AREAS"

Presented by the North Sea Commission

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The CPMR Fisheries Inter Commission Group (CPMRFIG) recognises the need for the protection of ecosystems, habitats and areas of special importance (application of the Birds, Habitat and Natura 2000 Directives).

However, when consideration is being given to the closure of any area, whether it is for the protection of birds, fish stocks, habitats etc, it is clear that the definition and design of a closed area and the mechanisms necessary to manage, enforce and monitor such an arrangement is a complex matter.

This subject has benefited from substantial academic study, most of which points to the conclusion that the success of closed areas and marine protected areas depend crucially on the close involvement of stakeholders/communities in the specification of the designated area and on broad stakeholders/communities for the stated objectives and operation mechanism.

Any closed area or marine protected areas should:

- Have clear aims and objectives;
- Be timebound;
- Be actively managed to ensure its effectiveness;
- Have a mid term evaluation agreed;
- Have a clear exit strategy;
- Respect the culture and needs of local communities.

All of the above should after extensive consultation, have the full support of stakeholders, communities affected and the local and regional authorities.

**Adopted unanimously**

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## - II.2 -

### RESOLUTION ON THE MARITIME POLICY CHALLENGES IN THE BALTIC AND THE NORTH SEA REGIONS

Presented by the North Sea Commission and the Baltic Sea Commission

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1. The Baltic and the North Sea Commissions welcome the opportunity to comment on the EU Green Paper on a Maritime Policy. The Baltic and the North Sea Commissions appreciate that there is great potential for future economic growth in the Maritime Regions if resources are managed in a concerted, innovative & sustainable way. There is a need for long – term thinking on global changes, both in economic and environmental terms.
2. The European Seas is surrounded by Seas, with ecosystems crossing EU borders. A future European Maritime Policy must include close co-operation with countries outside the European Union. Therefore, it is positive that other countries, for example Norway, have been contributors to the Green Paper process.
3. Our common maritime resources must be managed in a competitive, innovative and sustainable way. Maritime transportation, fisheries and fish-farming, energy production etc must be carried out in harmony with the marine environment, supported by research and innovative actions. Sea use planning could serve as a tool to prevent conflicts of use in intensely used offshore areas. The preparation of spatial plans for offshore areas, wherever appropriate, and a cross sectoral assessment of specific offshore projects would support such a tool. In this way, a common Maritime Policy can successfully support both the Lisbon and Gothenburg agendas.
4. Also in the future it will be necessary to intensify initiatives for a cleaner Sea. For example: clear concern has repeatedly been expressed from the North Sea Commission about discharges of radioactive waste to sea, particularly from the reprocessing plants in Sellafield. The British Government must fulfil the promised moratorium on discharges at the earliest possible date. The THORP plant, which was closed after a heavy leakage last year, must not be put in operation again. The leakages from Sellafield are categorised as serious by the International Measuring System for Nuclear Accidents (INES). The Sellafield issue has been presented to the EU court by Ireland.
5. The Baltic and the North Sea Commissions welcome the commitment made by North Sea Ministers in Gothenburg at MM06 to progress the “clean ship initiative” but it is important that future work on reducing the environmental impact of shipping is seen as a priority. It remains a matter of real concern that ships’ fuel remain unregulated and we call on the EU to start work on drafting a new directive on the quality of marine fuels.
6. More generally, initiatives targeting pollution from shipping and maritime fuels would contribute to achieving cleaner Seas.
7. Sustainability also means a sound basis of income and supporting the livelihoods of the coastal population. In this context, the further development of maritime clusters is important – linking businesses to research and training.
8. A successful Maritime Policy must also recognise the importance of culture, heritage and local identity as essential assets for a sustainable tourism industry and regional development policies in supporting sustainable and competitive coastal communities.
9. The debate on the Green Paper will provide an opportunity to review a number of sectoral policies. From a regional and democratic perspective, it is important that local communities, and especially people living in coastal areas and islands, are being invited to take an active part in the consultation and policy shaping process. The regions should also have a role in the decision-making process.
10. However, policies should not be developed purely along sectoral lines. Sectors such as transport and the environment are interdependent; therefore potential for synergy between sectoral policies should be incorporated into the Maritime Policy. A flexible approach to marine management involving regional actors will be crucial to the success of the Policy.
11. The expected development in north-west Russia is also important for the Baltic and North Sea Regions. The logistic pattern, for example, will undergo fundamental changes. Therefore, the establishment of a

Northern Maritime Corridor is also important as well as strengthened development of east-west corridors between North and Baltic Seas and development of the transnational intermodal transport corridors proposed by the high level group: Motorways of the Sea and the Northern Axis for areas outside the Baltic and North Seas.

The Baltic Sea and the North Sea Commissions urge Member States' Governments to raise these issues within the European Union and support the development of these corridors in their areas.

Motorways of the Sea should fit into existing or new TEN-corridors in order to attract intermodal logistic chains, especially rail and sea. A well functioning ice-breaking is of outmost importance to sea transports in the Baltic Sea.

12. In the interest of maintaining and promoting maritime safety it is proposed that immediate steps be taken to introduce an Automatic Identification System (AIS) across the North Sea and the waters of the proposed Northern Maritime Corridor. It is further proposed that the model, currently being tested in Norwegian waters, be used as the basis for such a system.
13. It is noted that the European Commission, under the Trans-European Transport Network, has proposed to establish a Motorways of the Sea (MoS) network in several areas, but not yet in the non-EU parts of the North Sea. The North Sea Commission will urge Member States Governments to raise this issue within EU, with a view of extending the MoS corridor all the way up to the Barents Region, as proposed by the High Level Group report on the extension of the TEN-T to neighbouring countries and regions. The expected increase in goods volume means a sharpened focus on better sea transportation and intermodality in the future. Efficient ports and good hinterland connections in a multi-modal chain will be required to support this development.
14. A comprehensive and effective Maritime Policy must also take an active role in improving maritime safety.
15. Up to now, the INTERREG programmes have been a useful instrument to support maritime policy in the North Sea and Baltic Sea Area, resulting in a number of important projects. In the new Objective 3 North Sea and Baltic Sea Programmes (2007-2013), the maritime dimension should be emphasized. The Maritime Safety Umbrella Operation, initiated by the INTERREG North Sea Region, should be developed into a pan-European instrument. This in co-operation with the Helsinki Commission, HELCOM, a national body active in the Baltic Sea area, who has invited representatives from the CPMR Baltic Sea Commission in its work. HELCOM works to protect the marine environment of the Baltic Sea from all sources of pollution through intergovernmental co-operation between states around the Baltic Sea (including Russia) and the European Union. Also in cooperation with the BSR countries is drafting of Appropriated Protection Measures within the PSSA (Particularly Sensitive Sea Area).
16. In order for the Maritime Policy to fulfil its aims and objectives it must support the Lisbon and Gothenburg Agendas. Furthermore, there is a need for co-ordination with a number of EU initiatives, like the Motorways of the Sea, Short Sea Shipping, the Maritime Safety Packages and the Marine Environmental Policy. Finally, common actions between all levels of administration are necessary to secure sustainable development in the Baltic and North Sea area.

**Adopted unanimously**



## **RESOLUTION ON THE NORTHERN DIMENSION POLICY FOR 2007 AND ONWARDS**

Presented by the North Sea Commission and the Baltic Sea Commission

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The overall objective of the Northern Dimension policy is to strengthen peace through intensified cross border co-operation and economic integration and development, which will increase the welfare in the whole Northern Dimension Area as well as in the whole European Union. The Northern Dimension policy is thus a process which intensifies cross border contacts. Cross border co-operation around the Baltic Sea already exists but to advance this development of the Northern Dimension Policy and its Action Plan help to co-ordinate the efforts.

The Baltic Sea has gone through a historical transition period and is still affected by sweeping changes. The enlargement of the European Union, the integration process in Europe and globalisation, as well as regional policy, which is still inadequate from the peripheral point of view, have obvious consequences in the maritime Baltic Sea Area.

The political framework in Northern Europe has thus changed. The Northern Dimension covers a broad geographic area, from Northwest Russia in the East, to Iceland and Greenland in the West and from the Arctic and sub-Arctic, to the Southern shores of the Baltic Sea. The enlargement of the European Union meant that Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia and Poland, who border the Baltic Sea and are covered by the Northern Dimension policy, became members of the European Union. This meant that nearly all states surrounding the Baltic Sea became part of the internal politics and financial instruments of the European Union. The enlarged European Union around the Baltic Sea strengthens not only the European Union. It also opens new prospects for economic development and the gateway positions of regions in the Baltic Sea Area.

In May 2005 the European Union and Russia agreed, as part of their strategic partnership, on road maps for implementing the four common spaces: common economic space; common space for freedom, security and justice; common space for research, education and culture; and a common space for external security. The result of the partnership and the road maps are thus furthering integration between the European Union and Russia.

Furthermore, the financial possibilities for cross-border and transitional co-operation within the Northern Dimension will change after 2006 when the new financial instruments of European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument as well as the new structural funds, will come into force. This will also effect the further development of the Northern Dimension and the co-operation in the Baltic Sea Area.

The Northern Dimension provides a broad framework for a common effort to develop the societies and economies of the countries in Northern Europe. The Northern Dimension has already strong traditions through cross border co-operation of regional actors in Northern Europe. The integration of Russia into the process of European co-operation, the extension of the zone of stability and welfare to the Eastern part of Europe as well as the further development of the whole Northern European area are fundamental aims. These aims are not only in the interest of those countries located in the Northern European area, they are of interest and will benefit all of Europe, and therefore require active support by all European actors. The Northern Dimension is not only projects and programmes, but also a forum for dialogue and therefore it should actively involve, in a clear and coherent way, regional and local level actors and their networks.

### **General comments**

The CPMR Baltic Sea and North Sea Commissions support the Northern Dimension policy and welcomes future development of strategic documents such as a third Action Plan for Northern Dimension.

To strengthen the support for the Northern Dimension, the implementation of a new Action Plan is vital and it is important that the European Union, Iceland, Norway and Russia agree, stay devoted and follow adopted strategic documents. Hence, it is also important that EU agreements with Norway, Iceland (EFTA) and especially Russia (Partnership agreement and the road maps) are reflected in and supported by the

Northern Dimension. When rewriting and reshaping a Northern Dimension Action Plan the whole geographical area of the Northern Dimension should be maintained even though special attention must be given to the EU-Russia common spaces.

The experience of the Northern Dimension Action Plans has demonstrated that its implementation is not possible without the active involvement and contribution of regional and local actors and their far-reaching and well established co-operation networks. In implementing a new Northern Dimension Action Plan, we regard it as essential to build on this experience. Numerous ongoing projects - for example Interreg III B Baltic Sea Region programme demonstrates the abilities of the regional level and should be seen as a positive and important contribution to the implementation of Northern Dimension.

Regional and local actors constitute the foundation of the Northern Dimension and its successfulness by their active participation. However, the CPMR Baltic Sea and North Sea Commissions recognise that the European Commission's commitment and its active role as a hub, co-ordinating actions, are crucial. The European Commission's role is consequently of great importance in the process of developing, implementing and following up the activity within the Northern Dimension and shall be preserved.

The current Northern Dimension Action Plan comprises a two-year period. The policy sets the vision and the Action Plans give guidelines for specific actions to take within the Northern Dimension. CPMR Baltic Sea and North Sea Commissions believe that long term planning would make the Northern Dimension more durable. A new Action Plan could thus be better co-ordinated with the new financial instrument within the structural funds (the future objective 3 - transnational co-operation programme) in the Baltic Sea and North Sea Regions and the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, which will operate in the new financial perspective 2007-2013.

Although the Baltic Sea and North Sea Commissions would prefer an independent budget line for the Northern Dimension, we are convinced that a sufficient budget allocation within the financial instrument as INTERREG Northern Periphery, INTERREG Baltic Sea Region and INTERREG North Sea Region would allow the regions to access sufficient funding to efficiently implement activities within the Northern Dimension.

To get the most out of available financial instruments in co-operation with regions within and outside of the European Union after 2006, the use of European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument must be interoperable with the financial instruments within the structural funds.

Financial instruments from other institutions like the G8-States, which enable multinational projects in this area especially in the field of nuclear safety and environment, shall be considered as helpful tools to achieve common goals.

The CPMR Baltic Sea and North Sea Commissions also believe, that the introduction of "Tripartite Contracts" could help facilitate project co-operation of a cross-border and transnational nature in several priority fields for the Northern Dimension.

### **Thematic contributions**

With reference to the priority sectors set out in the Guidelines *we* would like to under line *our* particular interest in enhanced co-operation on the following issues:

#### *Economy, Business and Infrastructure*

The CPMR Baltic Sea and North Sea Commissions welcome the European Commission's proposal on the revision of the TEN T-guidelines, which have a vital impact on the Northern Dimension Policy. The introduction of Motorways of the Sea to the list of priority projects offers a realistic objective both to reach intermodal shift effects and better connect geographically disadvantaged regions by transnational maritime links. The CPMR Baltic Sea and North Sea Commissions recognise the need to build efficient transport systems in order to cope with future cargo flows due to increased trade between Russia and China on the one side and Western Europe and USA on the other. At the same time because of the harsh natural conditions in the Baltic Sea sufficient funding should be guaranteed for research and development to keep

the transport systems safe and running all year round. By building efficient and environmentally sustainable transport systems that use rail and sea, we believe that it is possible to create regional development throughout the region. One important issue will be to assure that Motorways of the Sea fit in existing or new TEN-corridors in order to attract intermodal logistic chains. Moreover, current approved and already existing INTERREG-projects such as "Baltic Gateway", the Northern Maritime Corridor as well as the NETA-project should be taken into consideration. Another project of great importance is the North East West Corridor (N.E.W. Corridor), which is a "multiroute corridor" where the idea is east-west transports through the northern, less congested and political stable parts of Europe.

There are significant natural and mineral resources in the area of Fennoscandia where the arctic nature is very sensitive. The European Union is dependent on natural resources and minerals outside of its external borders and through the Northern Dimension is co-operating, supporting and building environmentally friendly production and mining techniques e.g. in Northwest Russia. The European Union may also strengthen its self-sufficiency in natural resources and minerals by preserving the nature in the Northern Dimension area.

#### *Freedom, Security and Justice*

The CPMR Baltic Sea and North Sea Commissions support actions taken within the Northern Dimension that fosters a secure and efficient management of the EU-Russia border to prevent illegal movements and at the same time allows an easy passage for legitimate trade and travel, reducing waiting times, improving infrastructure, increasing co-operation between relevant border authorities, and of the harmonisation of legislation, standards and procedures.

#### *Research, Education and Culture*

The CPMR Baltic Sea and North Sea Commissions would like to underline the importance of the cultural qualities and the diversity that exists within the Northern Dimension area. Greater focus should be put on strengthening the regions' possibility to develop their own identity as well as to find good answers to the challenges they face. Projects to strengthen the cultural identity in the Northern Dimension area should be given priority - among others to strengthen people-to-people relations between regions and countries. The Northern Dimension influences the development of future societies and the new generations. It is therefore important to focus on young people's participation, engagement, interests and ideas when concrete projects and actions are shaped - among others through the implementation of a new Northern Dimension Action Plan.

Research and development needs to strengthen its position in all areas of co-operation. The CPMR Baltic Sea and North Sea Commissions believe that further development of meta co-operation networks such as the ScanBalt initiative, aimed at the development of a network of networks in the life science field in Northern Europe with the aim of establishing this region as a major player in the European and global biotechnology arena.

#### *Environment, nuclear safety and natural resources*

The coastal regions are the ones suffering from the harmful effects of oil spills and the citizens and business life of the coastal regions will suffer from the consequences of lack of maritime safety. The regions therefore call upon the national governments to have a proactive attitude to maritime safety and to develop a safety culture in the application of their national policy. This concerns both preventive action as well as systems to deal with the incidents that actually occur. Regional authorities offer their participation as a working partnership with national governments and across national and regional borders.

The development of large oil-harbours in Russia - in the north as well as in the coastal areas of Gulf of Finland close to St. Petersburg - will lead to increased tanker-transport along the Norwegian coast as well as in the Baltic Sea - Kattegat - Skagerrak into the North Sea. The consequences of an oil catastrophe in the Northern Dimension area will be remarkable, and we therefore strongly recommend that this issue receives particular attention in the implementation of a new Northern Dimension Action Plan.

Based on the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive, that due to the EEA agreement is also binding for Norway, great challenges arise for regions and municipalities in the Northern Dimension area.

Many of the new EU member states and Russia have large environmental problems connected to water and water supply.

Regional and local authorities in the Baltic Sea and North Sea Regions have experience and competence in this field, and can contribute to a positive development among others by getting a better overview of pollution in rivers and lakes, water quality management programmes, freshwater supply, knowledge transfer and competence development. Water quality management, cleaning development of river and lake areas should therefore, to our mind, be included and taken into consideration when implementing a new Northern Dimension Action Plan.

The IMO has declared the Baltic Sea Area as a PSSA – Particularly Sensitive Sea Area. In regard to the pollution problems, for instance toxic substances in fish, not only in the rivers and lakes, but also the sea must be considered in the future work. The Helsinki Commission – HELCOM works to protect the marine environment of the Baltic Sea from all sources of pollution through intergovernmental co-operation between states around the Baltic Sea, included Russia and the European Union. These kinds of actions should be an important issue when implementing a new Northern Dimension Action Plan.

#### *Social welfare and health care*

In order to have a balanced development of the whole region, building sufficient social welfare systems is of crucial importance especially in Russia, who still suffers from the swift shift from a central planning system to a market economy. Many regions do not have tools, mechanisms and resources to influence their own regional planning and development. The new EU member states in the Baltic Sea Area will also be depending on good tools and methods to prepare plans and implement actions in relation to EU regional policy and the use of new financial instruments. It will be of utmost importance to strengthen exchange of experiences and models for regional planning and development between East and West in Northern Europe and to establish and strengthen centres of competence in the regions. Therefore cross border co-operation and partnerships with regions in Northwest Russia should find special support in the implementation of a new Northern Dimension Action Plan.

**Adopted unanimously**

